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Environment and Natural Resources Committee DRAFT Minutes

January 4, 2012 −9:30 a.m.

Members Present: Sean Weidel – City of Chicago, Joe Schuessler – Metropolitan

Water Reclamation District, Marty Jaffe – University of Illinois at Chicago, Stacy Meyers-Glen – Openlands, Deb Stone – Cook County Department of Environmental Control, Patty Werner – Lake County SMC, Nancy Williamson – Illinois DNR, Wally Van Buren – Illinois Association of Wastewater Agencies, Christy Sabdo – Kane County, Mike Sullivan – Kane/Kendall CoM

Staff Present: Jesse Elam, Hala Ahmed

Others Present: Karen Weigert – City of Chicago, Diane Tecic – Illinois DNR,

Christina Donley and Thomas Schroeder – BB&J Group

1.0 Call to Order

Jesse called the meeting to order at 9:32 am. A round of introductions followed.

2.0 Agenda Changes and Announcements

Nancy announced that Chicago Wilderness had received a grant from the Boeing Foundation to conduct green infrastructure mapping projects for Kane County and Blue Island. Deb mentioned that Cook County had updated its solid waste plan. Christy noted that part of the Kane County comprehensive plan update was online.

3.0 Approval of Minutes from November 2, 2011

The minutes were approved as written.

4.0 Coordinating Committees Update

Mike attended the Regional Coordinating Committee; he reported that the main items on the agenda were a discussion of changing from the so-called 55/45 funding split to a performance-based programming approach at the state level as well as the CMAP state/federal legislative agendas.

5.0 Sustainability initiatives at the City of Chicago

Karen Weigert gave a presentation on her vision for sustainability initiatives at the City. She noted that the Department of Environment had been eliminated and its previous functions embedded in other departments. Karen worked out of the Mayor's office. She said that what guided her initiatives was the idea that every decision could be a sustainable decision, from deciding where to work, where to live, and how to travel. She

noted that a recent Brookings Institution report had the green jobs sector growing in Chicago, and that energy efficiency was the biggest job creator in that sector. The City would continue to implement energy efficiency retrofits. It also would be working on smart grid, urban agriculture, and food desert issues. She also discussed creating an "energy efficiency zone" for innovation. Expansion of recycling programs would be occurring in 2012 as well as expanded access to distributed generation. She also mentioned the City's bike sharing program and protected bike lanes. On water resources, the Chicago River was being conceived as the next recreational frontier of the city, while major infrastructure upgrades were planned for the drinking water distribution system.

A member asked about innovations in stormwater management. Karen said that the previous managers for green infrastructure programs were still running them. Another person noted that it was good to hear that the administration still valued environmental efforts and that the programs were being kept even if DOE was dissolved. It was asked which department handled open space managed by DOE such as Hegewisch Marsh. The park district now manages those holdings.

6.0 The Millennium Reserve initiative

Diane gave an overview of the state's Millennium Reserve initiative, which is part of the America's Great Outdoors partnerships. The Calumet Core is the first stage in the MR. She noted that the press had reported the MR as containing 140,000 acres of open space, which was actually the planning area. The point of the MR was to have coordinated management using three land designations, based loosely on the biosphere reserve concept, as well as to modernize the Illinois Port District. IDNR hoped to bring in non-traditional partners to its planning process. She mentioned several approaches to implementation, including refocusing existing resources, utilizing public-private partnerships, and fundraising campaigns. She hoped to convene partners and advisory to establish short and long-term priorities.

A member asked about the relationship to the Coastal Management Program and whether the MR would affect the availability of funding through that program. Diane noted that the two were separate but related. Another person suggested that IDNR staff should use caution in talking about the poor condition of lands or neighborhoods, while another person suggested working with Indiana on Marquette Greenway implementation.

7.0 GO TO 2040 implementation update

Jesse mentioned that the first-year GO TO 2040 implementation report would be done shortly and thanked committee members who had contributed to it.

8.0 Other Business

None.

9.0 Public comment

None.

10.0 Adjournment.

Respectfully submitted,

Jesse Elam, CMAP staff liaison